

Notes on Meeting  
Steering Committee for the Survey of State Library Agencies  
March 24-25, 1999

The Steering Committee for the Survey of State Library Agencies met on Wednesday, March 24 and Thursday, March 25 1999, at the Doubletree Hotel, in Rockville, Md. Mr. Shubert called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Present were (\*indicates the individual was present for part of the meeting; \*\* indicates the individual was not present at the opening of the meeting): Kathy **Chamberlain** (Census)\*, Adrienne **Chute** (NCES), Michael **Freeman**\* (Census), Patricia **Garner** (Census), (NCLIS), Elaine **Kroe** (NCES), Keith Curry **Lance** (FSCS Steering Committee), Mary Jo **Lynch** (ALA), Libby **Law**\* (Data Coordinator, South Carolina State Library), Kim **Miller**\*, (NCLIS/LSP), Kate **Nevins** (ASCLA, SOLINET), Amy **Owen** (Utah State Library Director and COSLA representative for this meeting), Paul **Planchon** (Program Director, NCES Elementary/Secondary and Libraries Studies Division), Joanell Porter (NCES), Judy **Russell** (NCLIS Deputy Executive Director)\*, Cindy **Sheckells** (Census), Joseph F. **Shubert** (New York State Librarian *Emeritus*), Betsey **Sywetz** (IMLS), Diana Ray **Tope**\* (FSCS Steering Committee, Georgia).

Excused were: Thomas F. Jaques (COSLA), Tom Sloan (COSLA), Robert Willard (NCLIS Executive Director), and Barratt Wilkins (COSLA Research and Statistics Committee Chair).

The Steering Committee met from 1:30 to 5 p.m. on March 24 and from 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. on March 25.

(1) Introductions

Mr. Shubert noted with appreciation the presence of Ms. Owen, who represents COSLA at this meeting inasmuch as Mr. Jaques, Mr. Sloan and Mr. Wilkins were unable to be at the meeting. Ms. Garner introduced Ms. Sheckells, who has succeeded Mr. Cox. She also introduced Ms. Chamberlain and Mr. Freeman, who were present for discussion of proposed new software for the FY 1999 survey.

(2) Chair's Remarks and Agenda

Mr. Shubert expressed appreciation to Committee members for responding to the e-mail request for agenda items. He particularly noted the help of Ms. Miller in preparing for the meeting and Ms. Kroe for her work on definitions to be discussed today.

The preliminary agenda was approved with two additions (software redesign for 1999, added to item 4, and "Peer Comparison" software developed by NCES, added to agenda item 7) and the proviso that additional items might be added to Item 10 during the course of the meeting.

(3) Recent Developments in NCES Impacting on the Survey

Mr. Planchon described the current NCES organization that provides single management for the library statistics program. He also outlined developments and anticipated improvements in the NCES website. The Committee commended NCES for having posted the complete StLA Survey for FY 1997 on the website immediately after adjudication of the 1997 report.

Mr. Planchon also commented on the NCES budget request for FY 2001. The proposed budget would permit the Academic Library Survey to be collected annually, beginning in 2001. In addition, the Academic Library Survey will be converted to a web-based data collection with the data entry occurring at the institutional level.

The FY 2001 proposal also provides for the conduct of the Federal Library Survey in 2001. The five year budget plan proposes that the Federal Library Survey and the Networks and Cooperative Survey be routinely collected on a five year cycle and that the School and Media Center Survey be collected on a four year cycle. Lastly, the FY 2001 budget request includes expanded funding to develop a cooperative system for the school library and media center survey program.

Mr. Planchon referred to the Committee's September 1998 discussion of the *Assessment of and Planning for NCLIS Role in Library Statistics Cooperative Program (LSCP)* report. He said that he expected NCLIS to announce appointment of a staff member to direct the LSCP program at NCLIS [Ms. Russell subsequently announced the appointment of Denise Davis of Maryland.] Discussion continues on ways in which to move ahead in achieving a mechanism for discussion of cross-cutting issues. Mr. Planchon commented on the need for such a mechanism to improve data and to achieve appropriate consistency among similar surveys. By late 1999 there should be a complete dictionary of data elements, built on the document which Dr. Rossi provided to the Steering Committee in September 1998.

Discussion ensued on financial reporting in the StLA survey and the implications that the Federal Cash Management Improvement Act has for practically eliminating the difference between "income" and "expenditure" in LSTA.

#### (4)The 1998 and 1999 Surveys

Ms. Kroe noted that Steering Committee members had received a preliminary copy of the FY 1997 report. The final text and numbers in the preliminary report are identical to those that will appear in the the E.D.Tabs to be printed by the United States Government Printing Office). She added that the full report was posted on the NCES website immediately after adjudication of the FY 1997 data earlier this month.

**FY1998:** Ms. Kroe has completed editing of FY 1998 data for twenty states, and is working with the StLA in reconciling questions on data reported by 25 other states. Survey responses were due January 15. Ms. Sheckells provided a log that shows that 23 states met the January 15 deadline, and that the following states have not yet submitted data: DC, MO, NH, NM, NY, RI, SD, and TN.

**FY1999:** Ms. Garner, Ms. Chamberlain, and Mr. Freeman discussed alternatives for software for the 1999 survey (which needs to be ready by September. 1<sup>st</sup>). They reviewed alternatives for developing revised software, including use of Windows Desktop or Internet-based reporting such is being used for IPEDS. Following discussion, the Committee recommended re-writing the FY 1999 software – moving from Clipper to Windows desktop. The recommendation was based on convenience for the states (the states will be using Windows Desktop for FSCS data) and to ensure that the FY 1999 StLA software will be ready by September 1999.

## (5) Data Elements

The Committee reviewed document 5 which reported on (1) recent actions and follow up to the September meeting and (2) problems Ms. Kroe has encountered in editing 1998 data -- some of which suggest the need for clarification or revision of questions and definitions.

In the ensuing discussion over the two days of the meeting, the Steering Committee agreed upon the following clarifications and changes (These appear in the order of the several parts of the Survey, not in the order in which they were discussed. For exact language and full details of the changes, see the April 5 memo from Ms. Kroe, but note that that memo also includes changes which the Steering Committee approved in September 1998):

- ❑ Part B - Governance
  - ✓ Delete items 024-033 relating to the judicial branch elected or ex-officio trustees. The Steering Committee discussed the possibility of an alternative question on ex-officio trustees, but decided not to include it at this time.
- ❑ Part C-Allied Operations, State Resource Center, and...
  - ✓ Clarify that a law library should not be reported as an "Allied Operation."
- ❑ Parts E-Public Service Hours, Outlets and User Groups; F-Collections; and , and G-Library Service Transactions
  - ✓ Delete question 7 in Part E relating to "walk-in" and "referral" user
- ❑ Part H-Library Development Transactions
  - ✓ Clarify the definition for cell 117 (events for continuing education) by using the following language: "Report the total number of events (workshop, training sessions, etc.) which (1) the StLA sponsored and itself presented and (2) another agency presented with the help of StLA funding and planning support. Do not count events for which the StLA is only a nominal sponsor. Do not count events for an allied operation."
- ❑ Part J-Income.
  - ✓ Change the instruction for reporting LSTA income (question 17, cell 154) by removing the statement that "NCES will pre-enter the LSTA federal allotment for the fiscal year, as provided by IMLS" and substituting language which directs the StLA to report draw-downs during the state fiscal year. **NOTE:** This decision reverses the advice the Steering Committee gave in February 20, 1998. Mr. Planchon pointed out that an evaluation study of StLA financial data raised questions on the current (2/20/98) reporting practice.
  - ✓ Add a definition of "carryover" in the definition of question 17: "Carryover means funds carried forward from the previous year, sometimes called an "opening balance" or "fund balance."
  - ✓ Revise item 154 to read "***LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act State Program)***" to clarify that only the LSTA state-based funds should be reported in 154 **AND**
  - ✓ Revise the note for item 154 to include make clear that LSTA National Leadership grants are not to be reported in 154 since LSTA National Leadership Grants should be reported in item 155 (Other Federal Income).
  - ✓ Revise the note for item 155 to read "If the StLA received other federal income (e.g., National Endowment for the Humanities grants, National Historical Publications and Records Commission grants, LSCA Title II grants, LSTA National Leadership Grants, etc.), report that income in this item. If your state acts as the fiscal agent for a multi-state grant, report only the funds designated for your state."
- ❑ Part L – LSTA Expenditures
  - ✓ Revise the title of Part L- to read "LSTA State Program Expenditures."
- ❑ Part N-Electronic Services and Information

- ✓ Revise question 25 to read “Enter the number of Internet workstations available for public use in all StLA outlets that serve the general public
- ✓ Add questions to collect data on statewide database licensing.

## 6.LSTA FY 1998 Data Collection and Aggregation.

Ms. Sywetz briefly described the kinds of FY 1998 LSTA expenditure and program which data the StLA had been asked to supply to IMLS. She said that all but six states have submitted. The states submitted a report consisting of four parts: (a) a financial “numerical/landscape” data; (b) “promising practices/exemplary programs;” (c) report on goals; and (d) list and information on all projects. Ms. Sywetz provided two draft tabulations of data collected in parts (a) and (c).

The “Numerical/Landscape Data” tabulation collected will provide data on the number of projects and dollars in columns for the six principal LSTA purposes: linkages among libraries; linkages with others; accessing information; consortia/Sharing; computers/telecommunications; and targeted services.

The “Report on Goals” tabulation presents summary (not state-by-state) data on LSTA dollars and all other funds by type of library and user groups (children/youth/adults/elderly/other/mixed) for 11 types of projects.

In responding to questions, Ms. Sywetz said that the terms used to identify types of projects are based on the results of a word analysis of terms that appear in the State plans submitted by the StLAs. The study was conducted to develop a common vocabulary for reporting upon expenditures and projects in the 50 states, DC and the territories.

In ensuing discussion, Ms. Owen and Ms. Sywetz pointed out how the LSTA program differs from its LSCA predecessor. Ms. Owen emphasized the nature of LSTA as a state-based program and as an StLA- IMLS partnership and the ways in which COSLA and IMLS have worked together in planning for reporting and evaluation. Steering Committee members also noted (a) how the NCES survey data and IMLS reporting complement rather than duplicate each other and (b) the IMLS commitment to making information from state reports available to the public.

## (7) Continued Work on Improved Formats and Presentation of Data

Ms. Kroe indicated that the FY 1997 E.D.Tabs includes some of the changes which the Steering Committee suggested in September 1998. These changes include some shortening of table titles, additional footnotes, and subheadings in the table of contents. Ms. Nevins and other Steering Committee members expressed appreciation for the changes.

Ms. Nevins also noted the continuing interest in having an index and some comparative information from previous fiscal years. The NCES Website posting of the FY 1997 report enables a user to click on key words and do a keyword search of the report. Ms. Chute described other work to make Web-based data easier to use.

Ms. Chute also described the “peer comparison tool” which NCES is developing for FSCS public library data. A user will be able to enter the name of a public library system and get back information on “peer” library systems. The user will have the ability to select the data elements that will be used to define the set of peer library systems (e.g. size, region, total current expenditures). The user will also have the ability to select the variables upon which the peer

library systems will be compared (e.g., visits per year, collection size, size of staff). Comparative statistics will be arranged in bar charts or tables. The prototype will be further developed over the next several months, and the final version will be made available to the public on the NCES Website.

In the ensuing discussing, Mr. Planchon indicated that similar software will be developed for searching academic, StLA, and other NCES data. Ms. Owen suggested that it would be useful to demonstrate these developments at the COSLA/NASIRE meeting in Indianapolis in October 1999.

#### (8) NCLIS Developments and Research Impacting on the StLA Survey.

Ms. Russell represented NCLIS Executive Director Willard, who was unable to be at the Steering Committee meeting because of a Congressional FY 2000 appropriation hearing. She reported that OMB has invited the Commission to submit an appropriation request of \$1.3 million for FY 2001.

She reported that Denise Davis will head the LSP program at NCLIS, starting full-time in June. She currently working as a consultant for LSP in April and May. Ms. Davis' experience in the Maryland Division of Library Development and Services and her work for Gale Publishing shldld be useful to the LSP program. In Maryland, she served as a library consultation, network planner, trainer, and as FSCS data coordinator

Ms. Russell noted that NCLIS will soon publish the final report on Assessment of Electronic Government Information Services Products. She urged Steering Committee members to review it on the NCLS website. She also briefly described other NCLIS initiatives including an international "sister libraries" program for services to children and youth, and cooperation in studying the prices of journals. In response to a question, she said that the Commission continues to have a Committee on Statistics, headed by Commissioner Abramson.

#### (9) Assessment of the Survey and the Information It Provides

The work on a survey instrument for collecting information from Chief Officers on their use of StLA data is not finished. In brief discussion on improving data collection, facilitation wider access, presentation of data, and encouraging use of the StLA data made in the ensuing discussion included:

- ◆ sponsor a training workshop for both the individuals who the chief officers have assigned the StLA survey and data coordinators
- ◆ provide links between the NCES and IMLS websites to provide easier access to library data..
- ◆ encourage re-publication of portions or all of the Highlights data in the library pres
- ◆ ask Mr. Wilkins to post a series of portion of the Highlights in e-postings to COSLA
- ◆ continue to encourage use of the E.D. Tabs.

#### (11) Adjournment and Next Meetings

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m. Thursday, March 25. The Committee will meet in Washington, DC on September 22-23, 1999 and in San Antonio TX on Wednesday, March29 – Thursday March, 2000.

J. Shubert

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List of documents distributed before or at the meeting:

1. Agenda
2. StLA Survey Steering Committee Roster – March 1999
3. StLA Survey Steering Committee Meeting Participant List – March 1999
4. Notes on StLA Survey Steering Committee Meeting, September 23-24, 1999
5. The Survey of State Library Agencies: The Survey and Its Steering Committee – A Statement Approved by the Steering Committee February 20, 1998
6. FY 1999 StLA Survey Facsimile – Agenda Items 3 and 4
7. Evaluation of the NCES State Library Agencies Survey, Page 7 – Agenda Item 3, 5 and 9
8. FY 98 Control Log StLA, March 24, 1999 – Agenda Item 4
9. Information and Proposals for Data Elements Discussion, March 24, 1999 - Agenda Item 5
10. *Draft* Numerical/Landscape Data – Part A-3; Total Grants by Purposes of LSTA - Agenda Item 6
11. *Draft* Report on Goals – Agenda Item 6